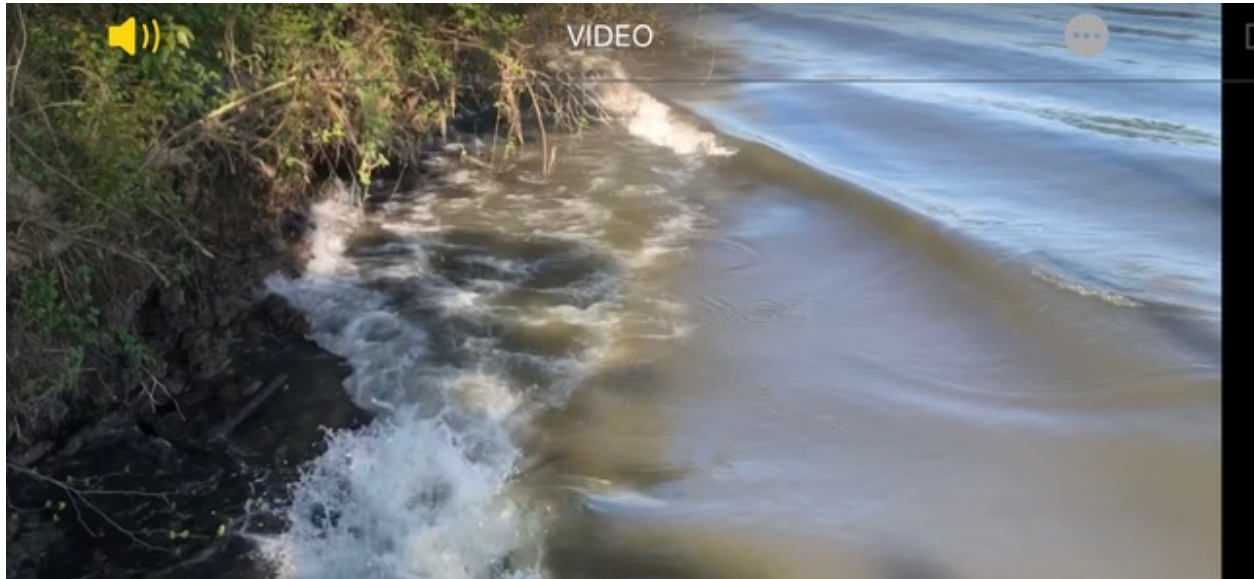


Testimony in favor of SB 857-7
June 24, 2021

This bill is an amendment to SB 857 which allows for the maximum loading weight of boats conducting towed watersports in the Newberg Pool to be 5,000 pounds. The original bill called for 4,000 pounds. This is a big compromise. This will allow all average sized wake boats to continue with towed watersports in the Newberg Pool. What it stops are the ultra heavy, ballasted boats that generate enormous wakes. Such wakes cause destruction of the shoreline, silting of the river and damage to marine habitat that supports species such as endangered salmon and steelhead. Although some bill opponents state there are no endangered fish or other species worthy of protection in the Newberg Pool, this is not the case. There are in fact such species, in particular endangered salmonids in this waterway that need protection from habitat destruction caused by wakes generated by the super sized wake boats. See letter from NOAA. Below is a photo I took of a salmon swimming under our ramp May of 2020.



Some bill opponents say erosion is “natural” and comes from river fluctuations in the winter. Not so. The undercutting happens during the summer and is the result of abnormally large wave action. See photo of surfer wake hitting our shore last summer. Note where the waves are gouging out the bank. These waves are artificially created by wake boats. There is nothing natural about them.



What follows is sedimentation of the river water. The photo below shows what happens after a day of large wakes hitting the banks near our farm.



This amount of soil loss, whether it be from a single wake boat or the cumulative effect of a day of wake surfing, is too much. The soft banks of the Newberg Pool cannot retain soil with this activity. This soil loss goes on every day during the summer, obviously more so on weekends. As a farmer I find this soil and bank loss disturbing. The people of this state should as well. It's their resource too. As are the fisheries.

The photo below shows silt released into the water from a single wake boat wave when it hit our shoreline.



Opponents misleadingly assert this law proposes to ban all towed watersports. Not true. It reasonably limits the weight of boats undertaking towed watersports. Boats heavier than 5000 pounds can be in the Pool but just not towing/surfing as heavy boats traveling at plowing speeds create oversize wakes. This has been proven by many studies. The average sport boat is well under 5,000 pounds.

In 2019 the Oregon legislature handily passed HB 2351 which directed the Marine Board to implement rules to mitigate the impact of boat wakes within the Willamette Greenway. The Newberg Pool is within the

Greenway. The Marine Board disregarded the Oregon Legislature and passed a rule allowing boats up to 10,000 pounds to undertake towed watersports in the Newberg Pool. This would include the largest wake boats made. This legislature needs to pass SB 857-7 to ensure the Marine Board follows the law it passed two years ago.

Bill opponents claim those in favor of SB 857 -7 are special interests and privileged homeowners. It seems pretty clear that the wake boats operators wishing to make the extraordinarily large wakes which damage private and public land and property, as well as negatively impact all other users of the Newberg Pool, are the true special interest. When these boats are on the water, and by the way the big ones can cost up to \$200,000, essentially no other recreation can take place. It is not the right of a relatively small number of wake boat operators to dictate the health and safety of the Newberg Pool.

Thank you for your consideration.

Maria Hall, Willamette Farms, Newberg.